

June 9, 2022

Vermont Secretary of State
Office of Professional Regulation
Board of Psychological Examiners
Policy Regarding Remote Pre-Degree Internships and Practicums, On-Campus Presence, and
Post-Degree Supervision

The Vermont Office of Professional Regulation (“OPR”) and the Board of Psychological Examiners (“Board”), recognize that the COVID-19 pandemic has had and will continue to have significant impacts on mental health professionals, students, and graduates working toward licensure in a mental health profession. This policy is intended to provide schools, students, professionals, and supervisors with information about the interpretation and application of psychologist licensing requirements that have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Please note that all other requirements of the Vermont statutes and regulations relevant to the provision of mental health care services and licensing psychologists in Vermont remain in effect.

Education: Pre-Degree Supervised Internship Hours

Under current Vermont statutes and rules, applicants for psychology-masters’ licenses and psychology-doctorate licenses must complete a pre-degree internship and/or practicum to be eligible for a license. This policy explains OPR’s and the Board’s interpretation of the “in-person” requirements for pre-degree internships and practicums to permit remote participation.

Accredited Institutions

The Administrative Rules of the Board of Psychological Examiners (“Rules”) recognize educational programs accredited by the APA as “acceptable” degrees for the purposes of licensure. Consistent with existing statutes and rules, OPR and the Board will continue to accept, for purposes of licensure, educational programs that are accredited by the APA, even if the APA revises accreditation standards in response to the COVID-19 pandemic (e.g., to allow remote supervision, internships, or practicums). Further, OPR and the Board shall continue to accept degrees that are accredited by the APA while the applicant attends the educational program, regardless of whether the APA reverts to pre-COVID-19 accreditation standards in the future.

Unaccredited Institutions

The following policy applies only to students who graduate between **March 1, 2020 and July 1, 2023**.

For masters-level psychologist license applicants and applicants who attended non-APA accredited doctoral-level programs, OPR and the Board will accept degrees from educational programs that meet the requirements of the Rules and that allow students to acquire pre-degree internship and supervised practicum hours through live, synchronous, remote means (e.g., audio-visual communication). The Board finds that such courses will fulfill the “in-person” requirements of Rule 4.1.

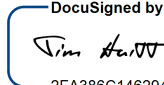
Education: In-Person, On-Campus Requirements

The Rules that doctoral-level psychology degrees include 400 hours of in-person, on-campus program and clinical courses (Rule 2.5(c)), and that masters-level psychology degrees include 275 hours of in-person, on-campus program and clinical courses (Rule 3.5(g)). For degrees awarded between **March 1, 2020 and December 31, 2024**, live, interactive, online program and clinical course hours can be substituted for in-person, on-campus program and clinical course hours. OPR and the Board of Psychological Examiners will continue to approve educational programs that do not include the requisite number of in-person, on-

campus program and clinical course hours from applicants who completed degrees between **March 1, 2020 and December 31, 2024**, even after it, again, becomes possible for students to attend in-person, on-campus program and clinical courses.

Post-Degree Supervised Practice

Due to the COVID-19 emergency, graduates of mental health graduate programs have faced difficulty acquiring supervised hours. Similarly, supervisors of mental health graduates are experiencing challenges in continuing to provide in-person supervision. To address this concern, supervisors may provide supervision to supervisees by meeting in person, by a telephone, or by videoconference until **December 31, 2024**. Applicants acquiring supervised practice hours may provide services over the telephone or by videoconference. These supervised practice hours shall be counted as “direct” clinical service hours. All other relevant requirements for supervised practice, as set forth in the Rules or elsewhere in Vermont law, shall continue to apply.

Approved by: 
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